

credit for is the fact that he has advanced forward dramatic education reform within his proposals. Unfortunately, the House bill will cut \$5 billion from the Department of Education and over \$1 billion from the Head Start Program.

When we are trying to look at our kids competing against kids from India and China, does it make sense, if we are going to grow our economy, to slash education programs, if we are going to have that well-trained workforce?

So I do believe the House proposal is shortsighted. I believe it does not do anything to take on the structural deficit our country is facing. I will continue to work with the Presiding Officer and I think a growing number of Members from both sides of the aisle. Our suggestion is to go ahead and take the good work that was put forward by the Presidential debt and deficit commission as at least a starting point and put in place as consequences if we do not act; that we will not solve this issue—which, I believe, is the issue of the day, which as Chairman Mike Mullin said is the No. 1 national security issue for this country, to get our deficit and debt under control—unless we can broaden this debate from the 12 percent of domestic discretionary to include, yes, defense spending, entitlement spending, tax reform, trying to make sure everything is on the table.

The House approach does not do that. The House approach is shortsighted. The House approach will not allow us to grow our economy in a way we need. I will be voting against that proposal when it comes to the floor. But I look forward to working again with all my colleagues to make sure we get a true comprehensive deficit and debt reduction plan that this Congress can vote on and put into action.

I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, I wished to rise to speak on the legislation that is currently before the Senate, the America Invents Act of 2011. I wish to applaud the work of Judiciary Committee Chairman LEAHY and Ranking Member GRASSLEY for working so hard to bring this complex, bipartisan legislation to the Senate floor.

As we work to rebuild our economy, get Americans back to work, and win the global economic race, we should all appreciate this effort to spur innovation and create jobs. Patent reform is an important issue for Colorado's economy and, of course, our national economy. High-tech innovators represent over 12,000 jobs in Colorado, and they

are an important part of our economic recovery.

In addition, Colorado has a vibrant biotech, clean energy, and aerospace set of industries. That is why I believe getting patent reform right and achieving consensus on provisions such as inter partes reexamination is so important.

Inter partes reexamines a proceeding at the Patent Office that allows for the validity of a patent to be challenged in an administrative proceeding. These proceedings are intended to serve as a less-expensive alternative to courtroom litigation and provide additional access to the expertise of the Patent Office on questions of patentability.

Inter partes reexam is often the preferred method of examination because a panel of experts is more likely to reach the correct decision on a technical question compared to a jury composed of laypeople. The inter partes process is not frequently used today because of procedural restrictions in the existing law. Rather than expanding the opportunities to use the inter partes reexamination process, the America Invents Act before us today imposes standards that are more restrictive than current law and are not supported by top high-tech innovators.

We need a patent reform bill that is fair to America's innovative technology companies and all users of the patent system.

By failing to provide any relief from the huge burden abusive patent lawsuits impose on technology companies and instead reducing the protections in current law, I fear this legislation will force these companies to spend hundreds of millions of dollars on frivolous lawsuits. These are dollars that otherwise would be used to employ engineers, produce and market new goods and services, and help Colorado and America win the global economic race.

As this legislation moves to the House, we must work to achieve consensus on inter partes reexamination. While I do not believe we have the right balance quite yet, I do believe this bill is a good faith effort to improve our patent system, and I am going to support moving it forward because we cannot let job-creating patents languish any longer.

As we all know, the Patent Office has an enormous backlog of nearly 700,000 applications, in addition to a half million new applications every year. Each of these pending applications will create on average 3 to 10 jobs. But while these applications collect dust in America, other countries are getting a head start on technologies that can revolutionize the way we live. I am very pleased the America Invents Act will address the funding challenges faced by the Patent Office. This legislation will allow the Director of the Patent Office to set fees as necessary, but it will also ensure that those fees stay at the Patent Office—all without any cost to taxpayers. This legislation will allow the Director to finally clear

the backlog and create needed jobs through innovation. It is my hope that the funding provisions in the America Invents Act stay in this legislation as it moves to the House.

I am also pleased that this legislation includes an amendment I cosponsored with Senator BENNET to establish additional satellite patent offices around the country. It is no secret that we believe Colorado is well situated to house a regional satellite patent office because of the combination of our rich and diverse innovative economy, our strong research universities and the fact that Colorado is a great place to live. I am confident that Colorado will be competitive in the process of selecting these new satellite patent offices.

In the end, I believe the America Invents Act goes a long way to help unleash America's innovative spirit, but we need to make sure that we don't make changes that could have unintended consequences for some of our most innovative companies. Let's get patent reform right. Let's move it forward, and let's continue working to make our patent system fair, efficient and supportive of innovators as we seek to compete in the global economy.

I thank the Presiding Officer for his attention and interest in his own State of Montana.

I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, at 12:33 p.m., the Senate recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. WEBB).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business until 3:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CASEY. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I understand we are in morning business; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

THE BUDGET

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I take this time to talk about the budget deficit and what we need to do in order to